



NEWS RELEASE

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Man Found Guilty Of Killing Homeless Former Baseball Player

A 33-year-old transient was found guilty today of killing a former professional baseball player in downtown Los Angeles last year, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Jurors deliberated for less than three hours before finding Billy Morales guilty of the second-degree murder of 55-year-old Rodney Craig. The panel also found true the special allegation that Morales personally used a deadly and dangerous weapon, a knife.

Deputy District Attorney Jacqueline Mac said Craig, who was living on the streets, tried to stay at a homeless encampment on Aug. 17, 2013. Other transients did not let Craig stay there and kicked him out.

As he left the encampment, he tried to kick a dog, the prosecutor said. Morales and Anthony Johnson chased after Craig, caught him and began kicking and punching him. Evidence presented at trial showed that Morales fatally stabbed Craig once in the chest.

Johnson, 24, pleaded no contest to one count of assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury and was sentenced in August to six years in state prison.

Morales faces a possible sentence of at least 16 years to life in state prison. A sentencing date will be determined later.

Case BA415281 was investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department.

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[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety.